1: Mi Mi Khaing I-5 (no date) 1946 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4
Mon AP9

(1)

CHAPTER ONE

YE is a small Tenasserim town of great delight to Lower Burmans. Though the houses are congested, bazaars and cinemas unknown, and robberies frequent and armed, the place contains things very dear to all Burmese hearts. Good food to eat and water to play with are found in abundance, amidst surroundings which form a perfect background for an indolent holiday. The Ye creek, muddy and about 50 yards wide at Ye, can be ascended to *chaung hpyar* (stream's source), where are gardens with bamboo huts and rich fruits on the trees surrounding, and clear swift water for bathes; or descended to *pinlè mè* (ocean's opening), where oysters and fat seafish are found and where there is a beach with a pagoda on the first stretch of firm high ground and shells along the foreshore. Now a train goes right up to Ye once a day from Moulmein, and a motor boat can take you in two hours to the gardens or the sea. My visiting cousins and sisters read Deedok Magazines and English detective stories brought in their luggage from Rangoon, as they lie on the bamboo platforms above the water, but my grandmother and great aunts, who sit by talking, see the children only as reproductions of my father and his brothers and sisters who were brought up here during the end of the last century, without sight or sound of any world beyond the two sides of the stream, the gardens and the sea.

Our stock is Mon, a race which came into Burma from Eastern Tibet before the fifth century, by which time they had spread over the Tenasserim coast, founding a kingdom at Thaton. They are known as Talaings, perhaps because Indians from a place called Telingana on the Madras coast came across with elements of learning and religion, and infused their Dravidian blood into our ancestors, so that even today Talaings are darker skinned than their neighbour Shans and Karens.

My grandmother and grandfather spoke Talaing, a dialect distinct from Burmese, and had never been to any other part of Burma; but Ye at the time my father was born (1880) had already been under British administration for fifty-four years, and was not very different from any other village of Lower Burma. There were vague and grand stories of the metropolis of Moulmein and of the growing far-off one of Rangoon and of the exciting new fashions and wealth that accompanied a knowledge of English and a job under the government in the towns, but even

1: Mi Mi Khaing I-8 (no date) 1946 AP1 Burma
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CHAPTER TWO

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MOULMEIN, Maul-la-Myaing to us, is a fair and prosperous city. It is fair in its descent from the hills behind, in three successive parallel main streets, to the wide Moulmein River, where seagoing ships can sail in, and an island rich in legend lies dark and green in the sunlit water. It had prospered since it was made the military headquarters of Tenasserim in the British annexation of 1826 until, in about 1900, it had over 50,000 inhabitants and a busy rice and teak export trade. Moulmein is fair also becauset he ridges behind are crowned with pagodas, and the hills and rivers contain waterfalls and caves, but to me it is particularly fair like a queen city that rides athwart her domain, because my father and my mother came from the two ends of the natural sphere of Moulmein's influence, Ye and Thaton, each from about 100 miles away, each sent by the family as an adventurous experiment, to meet and contract an understanding in Moulmein.

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My maternal great-grandfather was a Talaing general, and when I look around at my mother's family I cannot think anything else, for they are all most robust, alive and resurgent; whether I take the members who

1: Mi Mi Khaing I-5 (no date) 1946 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

CHAPTER EIGHT

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MY mother, who had strict ideas about keeping her household a neat family unit of father, mother and children, without dependent aunts and other relatives, had equally strong views about the maintenance of our family ties and traditions, especially as we were now having a Western upbringing in the English schools and not many counteracting lessons at home. Once a year at least, she thought, we should go to have the roots of our beginnings stirred and kept alive. When the younger children were old enough to travel easily, therefore, we went away for each summer vacation.

For her own home, my mother thought a short visit would suffice; the longer visit was paid to my father's family because he could never come with us to see them. In any case, the visits to Thaton were dull for children in those growing up days, all my mother's family like herself had gone into a more worldly life and were settled in their respective professions. The main part of the great house was shut up and empty, and my mother took us there just for a few days to see my aunt, pay a visit to the hpongyi, and to inspect rubber estates which we had just outside Thaton. Then we journeyed on to Ye where my father's family were still living the life he had planned for them when he worked to buy my grandmother her plots of paddy-land.

Our visits to Ye were pure delight. In childhood any change in itself makes a holiday, and the change from our district life to the life at Ye was very great indeed.

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A railway had been built from Moulmein to Ye in 1925; it ended at Ye where passengers travelling further crossed the creek and continued in buses for about 100 miles of mountain road to Tavoy. This was the only overland route to the Tenasserim coast below Ye. We crossed the Martaban-Moulmein ferry in the early morning, ate breakfast with friends while waiting for the connection, and arrived at Ye about 5 in the evening. Ye was by then the headquarters of a township and had a population of about 2,000. It was an extremely congested little town, for the number of its houses and inhabitants had just multiplied without any great changes in its original plan or acreage. The two main streets ran parallel to the creek, and along them the Talaing houses were packed, with only three to four feet of space between every few houses to give access from creek to road and from one road to another.

the last world was dissolved in chaos. On this hill five lotus buds sprang out of the earth; they opened into blossom, and from each flew a sacred bird which bore a sacred yellow robe towards the heavens. These five robes presaged the coming of five Buddhas who would guide the future world along the noble path to Nirvana. After this sign, that former world was destroyed; the present world followed, and the Buddhas appeared as foretold: Kaukathan, Gaunagong, Kathapa and Gautama, who successively attained enlightenment in this world, and whose statues now sit, each fifty feet tall and twenty feet broad, back to back in a great quadrate at the Kyaikpun Pagoda, calm and majestic as the grass grows about them and the rain washes down on their faces, awaiting the arrival of the fifth and last Buddha, after which this world cycle will be destroyed in a universal chaos. As each Buddha saw his enlightenment in this world he left a relic at the Theinguttara Hill, which had foretold his coming and which would now mark his attainment of wisdom—Kaukathan his staff, Gaunagon his water filter, Kathapa a portion of his robe, and Gautama his eight hairs which were enshrined in the first Shwe Dagon Pagoda after many perilous journeys.

But now the importance of Rangoon banishes all that into the realm of our dreams. The beginnings of trade date from about 1760 after King Alaungpaya had won a battle here and called the place *Yangon:* end of strife; but the big foreign port sprang up suddenly after 1852 when the British gained possession of it; the ships coming into its harbour from the oceans grew larger and larger, buildings followed the expanding commerce, roads and railways were built to all parts of Burma, foreigners crowded in and stamped its character, and by 1941 Rangoon had become a cosmopolitan city of over 500,000 inhabitants, more than three times larger than the next largest city in Burma and controlling over 80% of its export trade.

If the Burmese Empire of former days had been a sea-power, the development of Rangoon would not have been left to this late day, for its position makes it the obvious port for the whole country, and it had many natural beauties which would have made it a fair metropolis. Twenty-one miles up from the open sea, the Rangoon River gives a broad sweep to the left and allows a frontage of over two miles for ocean shipping to anchor. The river is a continuation of the Hlaing River flowing southwards from about 50 miles north of Rangoon and this, with the Pegu River and the Pazundaung Creek which join its waters opposite Rangoon from the right, made inland water transport also easy. The land giving on to the Rangoon River was open and flat for the layout of a fine city, with, further in, lakes and wooded hillocks, but just north of Rangoon the range of hills known as the Pegu Yomas stretched northwards for

•361 504 about 300 miles, dividing the valley of the Irrawaddy from that of the Sittang, both rich alluvial valleys, so that Rangoon could stretch out its arms uninterruptedly, by road and rail and water, far up these valleys, and draw down their teak, oil and other products for export.

The actual development had taken advantage of these natural points. Along the river front were several wharves which, dredged and drained carefully, could take vessels up to 8,000 tons. Back from the Strand the city was laid out in three parallel rows, roughly two miles from east to west. Cutting down across these rows to the biggest wharf area was the broad Sule Pagoda Road with the hill of the pagoda forming the natural central circus of the city. In this area of neatly laid out streets were the shops, offices, congested city dwellings, bazaars, narrow shut-in buildings and all the appurtenances of a city; and just where the innermost parallel ended, the railway looped through, flinging one arm up to join Prome on the central Irrawaddy, the other to Mandalay 386 miles away, and, from this arm, a line down to the Tenasserim coast. Beyond the city area the residential areas and suburbs stretched—fringing the Royal Lakes just outside with big houses of rich people; nestling among the wooded hilly Golden Valley round the slopes of the Shwe Dagon Hill, the smallness of this hilly area being drawn out with the meandering of the roads, so that the Burmese named part of it *Wingaba*, a maze, which hid cool retreats like the *Nga Dat Gyi:* Five Levels Pagoda, and a tank of sacred turtles; extending miles in a pleasant garden city of newer rich bungalows till it reached the Victoria Lakes, the University Estate and the airport beyond; taking on a village character in small wooden houses of a Burmese quarter at Kemmendine along which the Rangoon River flowed as a country river; and straggling out in less pleasant poor suburbs to the east along the Pazundaung Creek.

346 Over all this area, the Shwe Dagon Pagoda shone like a golden light. Theinguttara Hill, besides being an echo of the last world, is also the last spur of the Pegu Yomas chain which gradually peters out north of Rangoon. It has been built up to about 150 feet above the surrounding area, and from this platform the Shwe Dagon Pagoda rises, from an octagonal plinth moulded into a lotus bloom turned downwards, tapering into soft encircling rings from which is moulded again a gently swelling plantain bud, the clay merging into more soft undulations which rise to the very summit in the tightest bud of all—the *seinbu*, diamond bud—forming, by a re-echoing of the lotus buds which once sprang up here, a shapely slender spire, tapering to the point of a bud and yet composed of curves and gentle fullness. The whole pagoda was covered with pure gold leaf and its summit was crowned with a delicate *hti*, an umbrella of gold on whose rings were hung gold and silver jewelled bells which

voice, "Do you understand the hpongyi's language after being so long as it were one human amongst a thousand monkeys?"

Chastened and fortified by such injunctions, I was ready to plunge into six months of social life before starting on the serious business of earning a living. Rangoon should have offered plenty of scope for that, according to the rhyme about the first three cities of Burma: *"Moul-a-myaing a-sa, Mandalay sa-ga, Yangon a-kywa:* Moulmein for rich eating, Mandalay for fine speaking, Rangoon for showy vanity."

The Yangon-thu were grouped in urban or verdant clusters about the city of foreigners. There were two packed streets of the more prosperous trading classes in a western quarter of Rangoon, which the municipal authorities called Edward Street and Oliphant Street, but which to every Burman had always been known as *Kon-zay Dan:* Goods Bazaar Row, and *Shwedaung Dan:* Gold Mountain Row. Here the families lived in tightly packed unpretentious houses and did not possess Western style furniture or cars; they went to the cinema in rickshaws, but the women were loaded with valuable diamond jewellery which put many a minkadaw to shame. In the dusk of the evenings, they sat on wooden platform couches on the pavement outside each house, puffing at cheroots, calling out to neighbours and eating a variety of choice foods from the Burmese, Chinese and Indian restaurant quarter which surrounded them. In the east of the town, separated from this area by rows of Indian and mixed streets, retired Government officers were concentrated in a block. Here the houses were substantial, the sons and daughters attended school and University in cars, and the most eligible civil servants could be obtained in marriage for daughters, but the pensioners were the type who lived in a congested neighbourhood for fear of dacoits in a more open area, and whose womenfolk considered lawns and the drawing-rooms of modern bungalows a poor substitute for the access to cinema, eating houses and bazaars that a crowded part of Rangoon afforded them. Round about the Kokine Lakes and along the main highway to Prome, however, more newly retired Burmans who entertained on chairs, laid rugs on floors and hung pictures on walls in the Western fashion, had built pleasant modern bungalows. To the west of this area, just a stone's throw from the main Prome Road, began the village of Kemmendine with its rows of small wooden houses, each with its front enclosure full of green foliage, an altar-stand jutting out on the east wall, three steps raising the first and only storey a few feet off the ground, and wooden floors with one plank loose in them to allow the dust to be swept below. Kemmendine had its own bazaar, country boats on the river, and children and dogs playing on the street, just like any district town. My *Ko Gyi*, eldest male first cousin, lived there among small traders, clerks and school

361 177. 96 teachers. There were similar colonies of Burmese in the eastern parts of Rangoon—Yegyaw, Bahan, Tamwe and Pazundaung—but none so pleasant as Kemmendine.

361 438 563 When we were young, my mother's stock of household goods bought from their places of manufacture had shown us all the small industries of Burma. Now my sisters appeared to be as determined to do my Rangoon shopping from the most orthodox sources, and I learnt that to fit me out with a new set of Burmese clothes required the services and the varied talents of all communities of the cosmopolitan city. Imported silks, which were bought for longyis in addition to native silks, were the monopoly of merchants from Sind and Bikaner—houses of Ramchandra, Tejumal, Lekraj and others—who had set up windows in the modern Scott Market of Rangoon, and whose salesmanship had flowered in Burma into something vastly different from the nonchalance which they display in their native land. They offered cigarettes to casual buyers who fingered the usual run of silks, supplemented them with sweet coloured drinks from the sherbet stall behind the shops when they went on to more expensive satins, and if they ventured further into fine brocades and laces, dishes of ice-cream appeared as they waited for the material to be cut and measured.

Cotton longyis for day and night wear in the house took us to the western Burmese quarter of Rangoon. Here, in Goods Bazaar Row, the family firm of *U Hsin-Daw Htay:* husband and wife married in business, lived in the upper floor of their house, and stacked the lower floor with hundreds of cotton prints, made in Japan but manufactured with such an eye to Burmese requirements as regards texture, colours, design and width, that these *tha-yet-htè* longyis, as they were called, seemed to most people as Burmese as Bassein umbrellas or Mandalay slippers. All over Burma the women wore these longyis. The transplanters of the paddy, the young servant maids in a-so-ya mins' houses, the girls in Ye and a thousand other villages, women in bazaars and minkadaws themselves, all wore various qualities of bright tha-yet-hte prints bought for 10 annas to Re. 1/4 a longyi length of 1¾ yards. U Hsin and Daw Htay were prosperous; we bought our longyis from them through snobbery, in lots of ten, sitting barefooted on their mat-covered floor, with betel box in front of us, but it was possible to buy tha-yet-hte from the stalls of young Burmese women all along the big Soortee Bazaar and the Scott Market of the Town. These young women form one of Burma's fairest sights.

361 438 In the days of my schooling, when each new term plunged me into the foreign world behind Convent walls, as my mother completed the shopping for it on the last day of each vacation, I gazed back with longing

and envy at these fair creatures who continued work and home in one long pleasant Burmese continuity. They are girls from the ages of sixteen upward. Probably their parents set them up in these stalls, each separated from its neighbour by a stack of cotton bales, six or seven stalls on a long platform. They come there in the mornings, dressed in crisp muslin jackets and bright longyis, their faces powdered with thanakha and the Five B's, flowers in their hair, and fragrant ground bark on their hands and feet. They open up shop and dust with feather brooms while they shout across to each other the news of the previous evening. Then the whole day unfolds, calling out to food sellers and treating their friends to a succession of delicacies, button-holing the young boy who hawks magazines and tuppenny novels, and reclining against a pile of the tha-yet-hte longyis to read these romances, helping each other to fold up the pieces after a troublesome customer has gone, anything but making an earnest business of their profession. They always looked so cool and pretty and indifferent beside the small Indian storekeepers who flanked their platforms and solicited passers-by for patronage. "Oh to be a bazaar girl!" I still thought when I was in the University; "to pass unchaperoned days, reading novels and eating sweets, to have time to be powdered and neatly dressed, and only now and then be disturbed by someone who wants to buy a longyi." 361 438

Our starched white muslin jackets are made out of fine transparent muslin manufactured in England, and sent out in bales of 11 yards with the quality stamped in Burmese characters, and on the jacket a florid illustration of the quality-name—names such as *Nat-thami, Sein ta-hsok, Shwe Pan-gaing, Mè Nyo:* Heavenly Damsel, Cluster of Diamonds, Golden Spray of Flowers, Dusky Maiden—and imported by both Indian and Burmese traders. 294 439 563

The making up of the jackets was the monopoly of Chinese tailors; our *tayok-kalay*, little Chinaman, lived in the crowded quarter of Yegyaw in a barnlike room which was carpenter's shop at one end and tailor's at the other. The tailor's end had a row of shelves along the wall in to which the finished garments and uncut material were shoved, higgledy-piggledy in paper bags on which the merest scribble denoted owner and date of order. In front of this was the counter on which the cutter was at work, and separating it from the carpentery end was a table at which one or two half-clad men always seemed to be eating noodles or reading a Chinese newspaper, of which there were three in Rangoon. In spite of this, the tayok-kalay never confused an order for garments which had to fit so meticulously and always delivered them in a snow-white condition. He charged 9 annas for each fine handsewn garment, and for modern girls managed to cut twelve out of the eleven-yard piece. This 294 563 441 465

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

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Down the river there are hundreds of others of every variety and degree of decoration. There is the Naga Yôn Payā, the whole building wrought into the form of a dragon; the huge round-domed Kaung-hmu-daw, and the "king's victory pagoda" at Sagaing, the "golden cock-scratching," on the other side, commemorating a favourite legend of the boundless charity of the Budh. There are glistening white pinnacles, or flashing gold spires, far up the Sagaing hills, with thousands of steps wending wearily up over the steep, rough hill-side, and gazing up to them from the Amarapoora side are great massy temples, frowning over the river with all the stern solidity of a knightly hold. Each has its legend, some tale of bloodshed or piety, some event in Burmese history, or birth-story of the Buddha.

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Most renowned, however, for its pagodas is Pagān, in many respects the most remarkable religious city in the world. Jerusalem, Rome, Kieff, Benares, none of them can boast the multitude of temples, and the lavishness of design and ornament that make marvellous the deserted capital on the Irrawaddy. Deserted it practically is, for the few flimsy huts that stand by the river are inhabited only by pagoda slaves and men condemned to perpetual beggary. For eight miles along the river-bank and extending to a depth of two miles inland, the whole space is thickly studded with pagodas of all sizes and shapes, and the very ground is so thickly covered with crumbling remnants of vanished shrines, that according to the popular saying you cannot move foot or hand without touching a sacred thing. Some of the zedis are all but perfect. Restored by the pious, they stand out glistening snow-white, only to render more striking the hoary, weather-beaten ruins of their less-cared-for neighbours. Here the bell-shaped, solid pyramid of Lower Burma is rarely seen. The religious structures fully merit the word temple as understood in ordinary language. To quote Yule, who gives a detailed account of the principal shrines in his *Mission to Ava*, there are all kinds: "The bell-shaped pyramid of dead brickwork in all its varieties; the same raised over a square or octagonal cell, containing an image of the Buddha; the bluff, knob-like dome of the Ceylon Dagobats, with the square cap which seems to have characterised

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2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

346 the most ancient Buddhist *chaityas*, as represented in the sculptures at Sanchi, and in the ancient model pagodas found near Buddhist remains in India; the fantastic bu-payā, or pumpkin pagoda, which seemed rather like a fragment of what we might conceive the architecture of the moon than anything terrestrial, and many variations on these types. But the predominant and characteristic form is that of the cruciform vaulted temple."

778 361 The Irrawaddy just below Pagān widens out like a gigantic lake to over two miles in breadth, and the view of the sacred city from far down the river is particularly fine. Towering above the others rise the great temples of Ananda, Ta-pyi-nyu, and Gawdapalin, like visions of old-world cathedrals strayed into the desert. Round about them gradually rise into view hoary round towers, like a border "peel"; airy minarets as of an underground mosque; apparitions like the pyramids, chiselled into fairy terraced fretwork; huge bulbous mushrooms with slim lanterns on their backs, like the wide studio of a mad architect. There is a memorial line which, placing letters for numbers, declares the sum total of the pagodas to be 9999.

Hlè win-yo than ta-nyan nyan
Pagān payā paung.

The cartwheel's creaking strains
Pass Pagahn's storied fanes.

778 361 172 Probably, however, there are not nearly so many in anything like a complete state. Pagān ceased to be capital in 1284 A.D. The Emperor of China had sent a vast army to avenge the murder of an ambassador. The Burmese king pulled down a thousand arched temples, a thousand smaller ones, and four thousand square temples to strengthen the fortifications. But a prophecy found under one of the desecrated shrines robbed him of his courage, and he fled to the south; and ever since Pagān has remained in its present practically deserted state. The whole ground within the old walls is strewn with bricks and mortar. Some of the zedis are strangled with jungle growth, huge bushes spring from their summits and sides and tear the masonry asunder, and with the vast majority no attempt is made to arrest the ravages

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

of time, but Mr. Taw Sein Ko says in his report of 1908: "Numerous terra-cotta tiles have been found in the basements and corridors of several of the pagodas. They illustrate scenes in the *jâtakas* and in the life of the Buddha Gautama. They are of two types. In the Ananda and Shwezigôn the tiles are enamelled green and show Chinese influence. In the Petleik pagoda they are of red baked clay and have South-Indian resemblances. All three shrines belong to the eleventh century A.D. The stone sculptures in the Ananda are fine, and the pose, drapery, and contour are distinctly Indian. In the Sein nyet pagoda, halfway between Myinpagân and Thiyipyitsaya, of the eleventh century, the Chinese influence preponderates. The twin Petleik pagodas are at Thiyipyitsaya."

Few, if any, contain actual relics. The cloistered and terraced temples are simply receptacles for huge images of the Buddha and others. The corridors of the Ananda and Gawdapalin are filled with sculptured groups representing events in the life of the Great Master, and figures of eminent disciples and yahanda. In the central recesses, where are the colossal figures of the Buddhas, the light is cunningly admitted from above so as to fall on the calm gilded face, producing a most weird and striking effect. But Pagân would require a monograph itself, and with it should be compared Shwegu, between Mandalay and Bhamaw. That sacred island is a perfect forest of pagodas, and only fails to obtain wider fame because of the existence of Pagân. There are 999 shrines within its limits, and a much larger proportion of these exist intact than is the case with Pagân, though none of them can compare with the magnificence of the Ananda.

The question of the architecture of the Pagân temples, which is so different in style from that found in other parts of Burma, has been fully discussed in Yule's admirable *Mission to Ava*. He omits, however, to notice the fact that Anawrata-saw Min, when he established Buddhism in Pagân, built all the pagodas and temples after the exact model of those then existing in Thatôn, in the same order and of the same size. The town of Thatôn, above Maulmein, was the first settlement of Thawna and Ôttara, the

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma (Chinese Shan) AP1
Burmese AP4

Be 796

ninety feet high itself, is surrounded by twenty-four smaller zediyan of a much later date.

Be 796 493

Great crowds of people go out every year from Rangoon, starting early in the morning, so as to avoid the heat, though in February the bracing winds of the cold weather have not altogether gone. Most of the travelling is done in bullock-carts. These conveyances are not nearly so fine as the Mandalay vehicles, but they are neat enough; the pole is elaborately carved at the end, and above all they are roomy, and allow "Jack Burma" and his family to loll about as they please. Bamboos are bent over to form a hood, and over this is thrown a kullagā, a piece of tapestry-work formed of pieces of many-coloured cloth sewn on to a red blanket so as to represent figures; the scenes being usually taken from some well-known play or from the court. They are eight or ten feet long, and four or five broad, affording a capital shelter from the sun, and combining the advantage of being easily moved when there is a breeze, with the still greater merit of looking very gay and bright. The party starts off before daylight, young master Lugalé being left behind to guard the house till the rest come back, and testifying his disapproval of the responsibility of this duty by strenuous howls. The Madrasi sepoy lines are soon passed, and we get out into the undulating country beyond, and pass through the gardens and orchards which abound along the Prome road. The ground here is not suited for rice, and there are large areas covered with mango, jack, ma-yan, a kind of acid plum (which the perverse Englishman persists in calling Mary-Anne), and other fruit-trees, with pine-apples in long rows beneath their shade. The Chinese have great market-gardens here, miracles of neatness, but far from savoury in their odours. They never miss a chance of making money, and accordingly this morning turn over a few pice by selling sugar-cane to the girls, and bamboo pipes of palm-toddy to the men. The Shans, also born gardeners, to whom the fruit-trees mostly belong, are very pious, and join in the pilgrimage with their quaint offering-flags made of slim frameworks of bamboo, woven across in diverse patterns with vari-coloured cotton threads. A little farther on we get beyond the region of the market-gardens, and

Ba 361 137 244 563

Be 796 361

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

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pass between monotonous stretches of secondary jungle with no houses to be seen, though behind the strip of tangled bush there are wide expanses of rice-land with little bamboo huts dotted here and there in clusters. But the sun is getting high, and about half-way on the journey old Maung Gyi declares he is hungry, and draws up the cart under a bank in a shady hollow. The bullocks are turned loose, and preparations made for breakfast. The entire house service has been brought with us. It is not very extensive, certainly. A couple of earthen pots with covers, and a flat wooden spoon to stir up the rice or curry; a ladle made of half a cocoa-nut, with a handle in it; a big round flat dish of plain lacquered wood to place the entire feast on when it is ready; and a few bamboo, lacquered cups, without handles, with perhaps a plate or two, complete the list. The provender is equally simple. A heap of plain boiled rice, dried fish, chillies, onions, nga-pi, some salt and oil—that is the sum total. But it is eaten with zest and good appetite, and the little stream furnishes wherewith to wash it down. Then the ladies produce cheroots for the party from the recesses of their bamboo plaited pahs, and light up for everybody if they are good-natured.

Numbers of other carts have come up and stopped or passed on in the meantime, and, hilarious with his breakfast, Maung Gyi challenges neighbour U Hpe to a race; and forthwith the bullocks are brought into a shambling trot, and amidst much prodding with sticks and cries of "Hé noa" and "Tun-n-ng," and other sounds understanded of cattle, a fairly level race is kept up for half a mile or so. Then the carts are pulled up, and their inmates burst into loud talk, having been hitherto precluded from expressing their triumph or chagrin from a fear of biting their tongues off in the jolting, or of being choked with the dust. Notes are compared as to who is coming and who has stayed away, and then fresh acquaintances are sighted in the passing throng; and so with much good humour and pleasant meetings the fourteen-mile journey is safely got over. Arrived at the zayat, the rest-house, which marks the point whence the path to the shrine strikes off from the highway, the cart is turned aside among the low bushes; the oxen

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma (Europeans) (Indians) AP3
Burmese AP4

Be 243 452 435

do no harm in Rangoon rice dealings, and would win that respect from the farmer which heavy payments and cunning never will.

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Rangoon still continues to be the largest rice port in the world. From January to May the river is crowded with shipping—huge iron and steel sailing craft that have been chartered beforehand, and carry off thousands of bags in their capacious holds; and a constant succession of "ditchers," as the steamers passing through the Suez Canal are called, which come "seeking," and seldom have to go away without their full complement of "five parts cargo rice," or "Europe milled." The steamers are displacing the sailing ships, and the shorter passage now makes it possible to carry fully husked rice home without the danger of heating, which was supposed to be avoided by the partly husked "five parts cargo rice." Harbour-masters and river-pilots have a busy time, and gather together many pieces of silver against the later months of the year, when they will have abundant leisure to spend them. Coringi coolies swarm in the town, and their monotonous chant, "Eh-ya-mah-la Tah-ma-lay, Madras Ag-boat Tah-ma-lay," may be heard at any hour of the night or the morning, floating over the river. The British sailor overflows into the town and sings noisy old salt sea-songs round about the Sule pagoda, gets mad drunk on arrack, and not unseldom clears Dalhousie Street with a linked-arm rush, heedless of the red-turbaned guardian of the peace, who keeps out of the way in the meantime, but will break poor drunken Jack's head with his truncheon if he finds him helpless and strayed from his fellow-roysterers.

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The Puzundaung Creek, where all the mills are, is as busy as an ant-hill all day long, and all night too, when some of the mills are lighted up with Jablochkoffs or later forms of electric light, and the silvery rays shine ghastly on the black and bronzed mill-workers. Here we have the Madrasi coolies again, making noises, according to their nature, as a kind of assertion that they are doing hard work. The lank Chittagonian firemen, with their aquiline noses, are coated with coal-dust, and divide their time between firing up and having a whiff at the hubble-bubble when Sandy,

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma (Europeans Chinese) AP1
Burmese AP4

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the Scotch engineer, is not looking. There is a cluster of Chinese carpenters, chipping away with their queer thick-headed axes and planes, which, with characteristic perversity, they pull towards them, instead of pushing away as other workmen do. Here is M——, the English "assistant" at the mill, his hat and coat all covered with rice-dust, which hangs in queer fashion on his eyebrows and moustache. He is in high spirits. "We've got twenty-four pair of stones going to-day, more than anybody else in the creek;" and he goes off to see how the Burmese girls are stitching up the rice-bags, a duty of which he is particularly fond, and over which he spends a quite unnecessary amount of time. There is R——'s voice on the other side of the creek. He is storming at some men in the cargo-boat, who have done something wrong—anchored in the wrong place, or not started for the upper mill at Kemendine last night as they ought to have done. R—— has a voice which is the terror of every loitering coolie and dawdling boat-wallah in his employ; and he will be as hoarse as a North Sea pilot by nightfall, and will want a "double-barrelled" whisky and soda to moisten him before dinner. He wants company down to "the Point," and presently comes skimming across in his gig, manned by Chittagonian Kalassies, and we drop down the creek—they call small rivers creeks in the East—to where it joins with the main Rangoon stream. The Pegu river, tapping the country north-east and north of Rangoon, comes in at the same place; and there is a great crowd of paddy-boats here in the early morning. Each firm has its brokers, middlemen who make the purchases from the farmers that come down with their grain. They have been here since daylight, and fly about in their little dug-outs from one seller to another. The great point in a broker seems to be power of lungs and fluency in abuse. The amount of yelling that goes on at "Monkey Point" would silence the bookmakers' ring at Epsom on a Derby day.

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R—— has not come down to this pandemonium for nothing. There are a couple of big ships in, which must be filled, or there will be demurrage to pay, and a "canal-wallah" is expected this afternoon or to-morrow morning; so that the wheels must be kept going their hardest.

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2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

CHAPTER LI

THE PALACE

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THE palace of Mandalay lies in the centre of the four-square city, like the innermost of a series of Chinese carved boxes. The capital is a city within a city. The greater part of the wide plain from the Irrawaddy to the Shan hills, a space of about five miles broad and as many long, down to the Dôtta wadi, the Amarapura river, is laid out in wide roads running at right angles to one another, with abundance of houses of all kinds, from the brick house of the Chinaman, with its cumbrous tiles that bend in the rafters, and the white-plastered, flat-roofed habitation of the Mogul or Surati merchant, to the wood or bamboo dwelling of the Burman. They are not very close together, but there is plenty of space, and every house has its patch of garden, or clump of plantain trees, and its wide court where the buffaloes and the ox-cart can be disposed comfortably. But these only form the suburbs. The Myo, the city proper of Mandalay, is a huge walled square, each face a mile and an eighth long. The mud brick built walls are nearly thirty feet high and about three thick, backed with a heavy mass of earth, but though they would be hard to batter down, there are no guns mounted for their defence on the bastions which rise at intervals of about two hundred yards, each surmounted by an open-sided teak pavilion, carved in the usual gabled, joss-house, spire-like fashion. The crest of the parapet is deeply denticulated, with no other apparent advantage than that of ornament. There are twelve gates to the city, three on each side, but only one bridge to each three over the moat, except on the west, where there are two, one opposite the

2;Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

361 amingala or south-west gate, specially reserved for the passage of funerals. Outside every gate is a post bearing the name and emblem of the gate, the latter being the signs of the zodiac. Sixty feet, or thereabouts, from the walls, runs all round a deep moat, about fifty yards broad, covered in many places with the lotus plant that the Buddhist loves. Here and there upon it float a number of royal craft, state barges, and despatch boats, some of them richly gilded, with the kalawaik, the crane, carved on the stern, others foundered and lying rotting, with their lofty sterns rising high in the air. Covering each gate is a traverse, or crenelated barbican, of the same construction as the walls. Inside, the streets of the city run parallel to the walls. They are wide and fairly well kept wherever the king is likely to pass, but there is no attempt at metalling. Young trees line the sides, and [364] down most of them run little streams of water. There is no attempt at a drainage system, but the town is essentially clean and airy, the pigs and pariah dogs acting as scavengers, and the constant open spaces ensuring ventilation. Right in the centre is the palace, which has two successive enclosures. The outer is a quarter of a mile square, and consists of a high teak palisade, very massive and compact. Within this is a wide open space laid out as an esplanade, inside of which is a brick wall, edged round a great part of the way by the houses of high ministers and court officials. The outer court has four gates, each presided over by a special commander; the north, or water gate, being only available for the royal barges. Except for members of the palace household, there is only admittance to the inner enclosure by the gate on the eastern face. There is a special portal in the centre here, opened only for the king, and none but the Lord of the Golden Throne may use it. All else must enter by the taga-ni, the red postern, a cramped little gateway, which makes the smallest man involuntarily bend his head as he approaches the golden palace. The front of the building is decorated with gilding and tinsel work, which looks well when it is new, but after the rainy seasons would be better not there at all. To the left is the Hlutdaw, the Hall off the Supreme Council, a detached structure, raised some feet off the ground, and perfectly open; the roof, richly

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2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

644 631 782 announced massacres caused in England, and the whole thing was countermanded and denied. But upwards of a hundred people had been arrested, and some of these, when liberated months afterwards, declared that in the dark nights of terror, when no one ventured about Mandalay streets, people were buried under each of the posts at the twelve gates, as a compromise between the fear of the spirits and the fear that the English troops would cross the frontier. 644 787 Each of these posts bears an image of an animal from one of the seals of the king, and before the post sits a figure of a bilu, with a thick club, to act as watchman, in case the human guard should go to sleep. As Burman sentries generally sleep sounder than other people, the propitiation of these spirits at any rate was a very imperative precaution. Whether the oil-jars were filled and reburied *alone* is a dark mystery. But the smallpox left Mandalay, and the place is as happy as ever it was, which, however, is not saying much.

644 ●361 177.36 The British town of Mandalay is very different from that described. The Palace stockade has gone, and with it very many of the suites of apartments, notably in the women's quarter. The Hall of Audience for a time was converted into a Tamil Mission chapel; the Hlutdaw into a hideous collection of clerks' offices. This has been changed owing to the indignant protests of English visitors. Most of the Palace Halls are now empty: even the Upper Burma Club has been turned out.

The old City has now become cantonments with a few scattered barracks, officers' quarters, and wide stretches of grass. What formerly constituted the suburbs is now Mandalay town. The former execrable roads are now among the best in Burma. But many of the notable buildings, the elaborate monasteries, and gilt shrines have been burnt. Mandalay is certainly a dwindling town; the only question is how long it will remain the second town in Burma.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

712 forts Captain Barker of H.M.'s 89th P.V., the best English authority on Upper Burma military matters, said, "without ditch, without flank defence, without expense magazines, without traverses to protect the gunners, they are mere shell-traps for the destruction of the garrison." He might have added that they were without armament, and in 1885 they surrendered without firing a shot. Mandalay itself has naturally a strong position because of its inaccessibility. To the east it is guarded by the Shan mountains and the marshy plains below. Rivers and creeks make the approach from the south difficult. On the north is an impassable morass. On the west of the city are wide-spreading, thickly populated suburbs, and the river-side is defended by a high embankment. But the weakness of Mandalay lay in the worthlessness of the army and the feebleness of its armament. The kingdom of Burma was, in fact, nothing like so powerful as it was a quarter of a century before, when the second Burmese war was ended. When the end came Mandalay fell to a force twenty miles away.

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000 *Note.*—It has been brought to the writer's notice that several worthy Frenchmen have been hurt by the references to foreigners in this and in preceding and following chapters. It may therefore be noted here that the count who sold syrups was not the Comte de Trevelec, who was a contemporary of the Marquis de Gallifet at St. Cyr, and that there is no reference to General de Facieu, a popular, picturesque, and notable French gentleman. Neither were Louis Vossion nor Monsieur Fernand d'Avéra thought of when this book was written. Vossion was a stubborn patriot. Monsieur d'Avéra is a genial patriot with a doubt whether France or Upper Burma has the greater claims on him. In any case for fifty years Fernand d'Avéra has been one of the best known and best liked men in Burma.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

humiliation. As an instance of Burman carelessness in money matters it may be mentioned that when the final instalment was paid, considerably over the sum due was sent to Calcutta. When the overplus was returned, there was great discussion among the Ministers as to what could be the motive of the Indian Government in being so singularly scrupulous. 651

A good many districts were almost entirely exempted from taxes in recognition of special services required of them. The inhabitants of the capital were particularly well off in this respect. They furnished the troops to guard the palace and city. Moreover, it would have been much more difficult to oppress them with impunity, apart from the fact that if they were disaffected it would have offered a premium to rebels. For similar reasons some of the townships about Môtshobo were free from the ngwedaw. It was from this district that Alaungpaya, the founder of the dynasty, came, and insurrectionist princes always made for Môtshobo when they levied war. Several villages on the Irrawaddy, in consideration of supplying the royal gilded boats, manning the royal barges, and passing on Court despatches, were relieved from the family tax. But the petty officials took very good care that they did not grow rich on their immunities. 651 631

All these methods were more or less sanctioned by ancient custom. Modern ingenuity and requirements, however, found out new ways of raising money. The pious ardour of Mindôn led him to spend vast sums on the erection of pagodas and religious buildings of all kinds, as well as on the manufactories, cotton mills, foundries, and powder mills with which he crowded the suburbs of Mandalay, and closed when he got tired of them. All this cost a very great deal of money, which even the exaction of benevolences from wealthy courtiers failed to supply. Consequently Mindôn Min turned merchant and established a great number of royal monopolies. The producers were allowed to sell to none but to him, and he fixed the price which he was prepared to pay. For long, cotton, jaggery, timber, wheat, precious stones, and earth oil could only be had from the royal merchant, and the trade with British Burma was in anything but a satisfactory state. Then in 1867, Colonel 651 177-38 361 651

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

CHAPTER LVIII

MANDALAY AND RANGOON

[This chapter describes these towns as they were in 1881.]

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AMERICANS talk, and with good reason, of the magic growth of their cities. But for mere mushroom growth, Mandalay might compare even with Chicago itself, and if we are to judge of the progress of a commercial place by the fair criterion of business results, Rangoon may hold up its head in confident rivalry with any of the typical American cities. In the middle of last century the site of Mandalay was swampy paddy land and rank jungle. Now an area of five square miles is covered with houses, many of them squalid enough certainly, and with large patches of unused land round about them, but none the less contained within the city limits. Rangoon came into British hands in 1852, and at that time possessed no commerce worthy of the name, indeed it was only known as the place for pilgrims to the Shwe Dagôn pagoda to stay at, and the residence of the Regent of Pegu, as being the guard station on the most accessible mouth of the Irrawaddy. Ten years later, ships entered or cleared from the port having a tonnage of 295,000 tons, and the imports were worth £1,200,000, the exports £1,400,000, and since that date—a year or two after Mandalay had been founded—the tonnage has increased to 1,000,000, the value of the imports to £5,000,000 sterling, and the exports to £4,000,000. In a quarter of a century the commerce of British Burma rose to nearly £20,000,000 sterling. The population has quadrupled; public works are carried on; education is widely disseminated; the administration is carefully managed by British officials; a railway,

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2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma(Chinese)AP1
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163 miles long, has been made; there are 1300 miles of telegraph lines; stately law courts and other public buildings have sprung up, and so far from the work being a tax on the Indian Imperial Treasury, British Burma has been, after its first few years, more than self-supporting. For a considerable time it has contributed to the Imperial Treasury a clear surplus of a million sterling. The mere figures are in themselves surprising, but they cannot be truly appreciated unless they are read alongside the obvious, undeniable, and acknowledged prosperity and contentment of the native population. Since the annexation of Upper Burma these figures have been roughly multiplied by ten, and there is a steady yearly increase which would be greater if Burma were allowed to make use of her yearly surpluses.

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As long as there was a king of Burma, Mandalay was a larger town than Rangoon and an infinitely more picturesque one. It still remains by a long way the second town in Burma, but Rangoon has over-passed it in population. While Rangoon has gained, Mandalay has lost, but there seems no reason why it should go on declining.

The mushroom growth of Mandalay was entirely due to an autocratic order, but the number of ancient capitals in the neighbourhood shows that the position is an advantageous one. The astrologers and the king settled the new site between them, and when this was arranged a royal order came out bidding all remove themselves from Amarapura to Mandalay on pain of death in case of refusal. The transference of a bamboo hut is certainly no very great undertaking, and occupies less than a week in the pulling down and setting up. But the hardship was none the less where the people had gardens or fruit-trees growing in their yards. The Chinese alone remained firm. Their houses were of the usual substantial, heavy, Celestial architecture, and, moreover, they had built for themselves an elaborate joss-house, in splendour quite equal to the best in Rangoon. Consequently, they flatly refused to migrate the two or three miles distance to the new capital. The astrologers were as usual for using force, but Mindôn Min had more sense. The Chinamen were almost all British subjects, and moreover their dealings contributed substantially to the revenue. Their

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2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma (Chinese Indians) AP1
Burmese AP4

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village therefore remained, and has served to drag out a long suburb beyond the Arakan pagoda as a kind of connecting link. Numbers of later arrivals, however, settled in the royal City of Gems, and the wealthier merchants all eventually moved their headquarters thither, so that his majesty triumphed in the end. The best houses in Mandalay, the only brick ones, in fact, till the British came, are all in the possession of the Chinese and Indian merchants. Burmans had neither the right nor the money to build anything but wooden erections. These latter have, however, the compensating advantage that they stand all but the most violent earthquakes, while the brick houses, even when they are strengthened by an elaborate wooden framework, usually collapse when there is anything like a heavy shock.

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But the great majority of the houses are simply wattled huts, with large open spaces in their rear which serve to keep the town airy and well ventilated. According to Burman custom each house has its little shop with the entire stock in trade displayed to the view of the passer-by. As in all Eastern towns, those who occupy themselves with a regular handicraft all flock together. Thus the umbrella-makers and sellers of saddlery live to the south of the palace, vendors of bamboo-work and lacquered boxes to the west, while the potters and miscellaneous goods shops are mostly along the street that leads to Payā Gyi, the Arakan pagoda.

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Be 363

There was no attempt at metalling any of the roads, except in independent times the broad thoroughfare which led up from the steamer ghaut, past the ministers' residences, up to the outskirts of the town, for Mandalay lies two miles away from the river-bank, the idea being that at Amarapura the noise of the foreigners' steamers disturbed the royal repose. The big stones which represented the metalling on this one road were rather a trouble than otherwise, except to the vultures and egrets in the wet weather, when all around was a sea of mud, and the boulders formed an eligible coign of vantage. Elsewhere the streets were cut into huge ruts, and the bullock-carts went along in the hot weather in a pyramid of dust, and in the rains a ploughed field would be smooth going in comparison. But the gaily-painted carriages which always suggest a dog-kennel on

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

the guard dispersed the people. Next day, an old lady, who claimed to be the owner of the dog, visited the big Englishman and told him she forgave him. He was barely polite.

Burmans had no trouble with the pigs and dogs. They found their own countrymen much more awkward to meet. There was constantly some prince or mingyi passing along the streets, and then the road had to be immediately cleared, and every one knelt humbly till the great man passed. Any delay in clearing the path, or an imagined want of reverence in the shikhoing, met with very summary punishment. Before every dignitary rushed along a posse of half-naked lictors, yelling out to the people to bow down, and hitting round about them with their fasces and dahs. These masterful ruffians particularly loved to insult Englishmen. During Mindôn's reign an edict was published exempting Englishmen from the necessity of getting down on their knees in the mud and dust, but ordaining that they should lift their hats. The letyataung dearly loved to launch torrents of abuse at their victim, and make him dismount from his pony and remove his hat when the prince was half a block distant. In the spring of 1880 an English mercantile man was actually bullied into going down on his knees. But, as a rule, where it was possible, foreigners turned down a by-street, or into one of the waste plots of ground. This method of avoiding the annoyance was not open to a Burman. If he tried to avoid paying due obeisance, he was denounced as a disaffected man and thrown into jail.

But there were plenty of other obstructions to be met with in the streets of the royal city. Each householder was considered, or considered himself, perfectly at liberty to do what he pleased with the section of the road in front of his house. Accordingly, when the spirit moved him, he calmly blocked the thoroughfare by erecting a temporary theatre for the performance of a pwè. The construction of such a mandut did not take very long. A framework of bamboo was run up and covered in on the roof, and one side with bamboo matting, and all was ready; the stage was the street, and the spectators deposited themselves where they found room. After the three or four days' performance, the stage was pulled down, and the thoroughfare was clear again.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

361 541 During the season a dozen or more of these plays went on in Mandalay on the same night, and the entire population turned out to see them, thus effectually blocking as many streets as there were performances. This might have been awkward for the ordinary wayfarer were it not that he would probably infinitely prefer staying to see the drama to continuing his journey. Great men were not so complaisant. Two of the massacred princes, the Mekkhaya and the Thonsè, seemed to take a special delight, when they were belated on some roistering expedition, in breaking up such plebeian gatherings. They would come sweeping down the street with all their retinue, and the spectators, deafened by the music and engrossed with the action on the stage, would get their first hint of the torrent coming from the vigorous blows dealt all round about them by the howling lictors. Everything would be disorder and alarm for a time, men and women down in the ditch, the stage deserted, and the spectators scattered far and wide. Then, ten minutes later, they would all come back again; there would be a few remarks concerning his Royal Highness—"very often out at unexpected times, and always making his appearance so suddenly," etc. etc.; the bamboo erection would be propped up again, and the actors continued with the scene as if nothing whatever had happened, though the clown, no doubt, made as much fun out of the incident as he dared.

345 675 Going about at night in Mandalay was not much practised. Theatre-goers usually returned home with the rising sun. There were no lamps in the streets, and so every one who had business after dark was required to go about carrying a lantern or beating a drum or gong. If any one ventured abroad without thus marking his movements, he was promptly arrested by the night watch, and once a man was arrested in Mandalay it cost a good deal of money to get free again, no matter how good an account he might be able to give of himself. To save themselves the trouble of being constantly on the look-out as well as to trip up any one who tried to run away, the guardians of the peace had an unpleasant custom of tying ropes across the road an inch or two above the ground, and these were quite as effectual man-traps as have ever been invented.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

When a fire occurred in the Golden City, it was usually a very big one and burned until it could find no more fuel. There were two reasons for this. The most obvious was, of course, that wood huts, with an inflammable roof like thin grass thatch, caught fire with the slightest spark; and there was nothing in the shape of a fire-engine, even in the palace. The second was very characteristic of a despotism, and vastly more disastrous. Immemorial tradition associated a conflagration with a revolution. When an attempt was to be made to seize the throne, the attention of the people and the soldiery was always diverted by incendiary fires. Therefore when a house took fire the people found nearest to it by the night watchmen were always arrested and made responsible for the catastrophe. As a natural consequence, the moment flames burst out, not only the inmates of the house, but all the neighbours took to their heels and ran, without incommoding themselves with even the smallest portion of their property. A few of the royal troops came down after a time and unroofed a house here and there, and perhaps even pulled down some altogether, but their efforts as amateur firemen were usually of the most feeble and futile description, and the flames went on till there was nothing more to burn. Next day the unhappy burnt-out people came back and made for themselves little hovels of bamboo matting among the charred posts till something better could be run up again. The neighbouring quarters contributed something to support them, or they got their meals at the monasteries, and in a few months all traces of the fire had disappeared, the same rickety huts with the old scanty store of wares rose up again, and the scorched leaves fell off the trees and were replaced by fresh green foliage.

The population of Mandalay was a very queer one. Of the Burmans the great majority were soldiers or hangers-on of the various great men about the court. The residuum was composed of a few honest tradesmen and a vast quantity of bad characters, broken agriculturists, gamblers, thieves from Lower Burma, and outlaws from all parts. The number of yellow-robed yahans was extraordinary. King Mindôn used to give alms to five thousand of them daily. The jars of rice were arranged in long rows on a platform erected

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

specially for the purpose, with mountains of bananas, and trays heaped up with ngapi, curries, and condiments of all kinds. Thibaw Min was not so eager for merit, and actually went the length of driving a couple of thousand of the holy men out of the capital. Still even he gave them periodical feasts, and there were at least ten thousand of the religious in the Golden City and its immediate neighbourhood. Besides these there were numerous other nationalities; the Chinaman, smooth-shaven and prosperous as always, whether gaunt and big-boned from Yün-nan and Szuch'uan, or sleek and sturdy from Rangoon and the Straits, defying the most greedy official to rob him of his profits, and drinking his tea and smoking his opium-pipe with supreme composure and good-humour; the bearded Surati with solemn face and Jewish tricks of trade; the Palaung come down from the north with his bamboo rafts laden with pickled tea; the stalwart Shan with baggy blue or white trousers and tattoo marks down to his ankles, journeying in a long caravan with sword-blades and iron-work, and a cavalcade of mountain ponies; the heavy, easy-going Karen; the lithe, treacherous Kachin, bringing presents perhaps from his village, and on his way down spying out villages easy to raid in a night attack; all these, and a host of others, might be seen any day in the Royal City of Gems. There were not a few white men too, even latterly, when evil times fell upon them, and there were not the pickings that were to be had when Mindôn Min was king. But many of them were there sorely against their inclination. Mandalay had become an asylum for insolvent debtors, runaway soldiers and sailors, and unlucky adventurers from British territory, just as Rangoon used to be for India in the old Burman days. There were numbers of French and Italians in government service, as military instructors and superintendents of the various factories; officers who had been cashiered, or disowned by their families, or were in other ways under a cloud. One Count there was, who constituted the scientific branch of the service in himself, manufactured and sold fruit syrups to the captains of steamers, preserved a pocket-handkerchief with a coronet in the corner, and carried his lands in his finger-nails. The old king was shamefully cheated by a variety of speculators, not a few of them Englishmen.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

Perhaps it was his own fault. He had a perfect monomania for making cannon, and thought that every white man must have some notion of how they were to be manufactured. Consequently, whenever some fresh wanderer came to the royal city and requested employment, he was brought before the king, and some such dialogue as the following ensued: "What is your name?" "John Smith." "What can you do?" "May it please your majesty, I am a sea-cook." "Can you make a cannon?" Whereupon John Smith, if he was a wise man, would profess his ability to make the attempt at any rate. A lump of metal would be made over to him, and he would chisel and hammer away at it and draw his monthly pay as regularly as he could get it. When results were demanded he would either run away, or boldly ask for a grant of money to enable him to go to Europe to get the requisite tools. If he got it neither tools nor man were ever seen again. Such lack of moral principle was believed by the king to arise from the want of a Buddhist training, and he continued to be imposed upon to the very end. Thibaw still retained some foreigners in his service, but they found it harder to get their pay, and much more of a task to swindle the Government.

Thus Mandalay presented a series of violent contrasts: jewel-studded temples and gilded monasteries standing side by side with wattled hovels penetrated by every wind that blew; the haughty prince preceded by the respited murderer, his lictor; the busy Chinaman next door to the gambling scum of the low country; the astrologer, learned in his mantras, overpersuaded by the glib talk of the Western adventurer; and over all hanging the fear of prison with its nameless horrors, and the knife of the assassin.

In the beginning of the century Rangoon was in much the same condition, except that it was very much smaller, no better in fact than a village with the Governor's house and stockade in the middle of it. Now it has broad smooth roads, beautifully laid out public gardens, abundant street lamps, spacious mercantile offices, mills, schools, jails, hospitals, clubs, and halls. The population forms an even more motley assemblage than is to be found in Mandalay.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

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There are Chinese, Japanese, Malays, Siamese, natives of India of all parts, Bengalis, Madrassis, Panjabis, Parsis, Persians, Suratis, together with Armenians, Jews, English, French, Germans, Italians, Greeks, and all the European nationalities, mixed up with the native races, Burmese, Talaings, Shans, Karens, but they are all kept in order by the strong arm of the law, which is the same for the rich man and the poor.

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The same benefits are now extended to Mandalay, but it is a vastly less interesting place than it used to be. A siding from the railway cuts its way through the city wall; one of the pyathats on the battlements has thrown out corridors to make a somewhat barrack-like Government house; a carriage drive goes round Mandalay hill; the pigs have all been eaten up, and the pariah dogs are poisoned periodically by municipal order. There never were any sludgy sqwudgy creeks, but the roads, which were a passable imitation of them in the rains, are now eminently fitted for exceeding the speed limit. A, B, and C roads testify to the unromantic stolidity of the Military Intelligence Department; electric trams make it easier for the Burman to move to the suburbs and leave the town to the hustling foreigner. There are no agreeable scallywags. There are Cook's tourists instead during the three cool months of the year. The palace, instead of being tawdrily magnificent, smells horribly of bats. It has been declared to be an archæological treasure, though it is only about sixty years old, and has been horribly mishandled by unimaginative secretaries and a Public Works Department oppressed with sealed patterns.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

about the rains. In Rangoon the annual average rainfall is a hundred inches, but in Maulmein, Akyab, and other towns considerably over twice that amount is registered. In Rangoon, on 3rd November 1879, between one o'clock in the morning and two in the afternoon eleven inches fell. Happily this sort of thing is not usual.

In Mandalay, time was calculated by means of a water-clock, which stood in the bo-ho, the clock-tower by the eastern gate, where were also the gong and drum on which the watches were sounded by one, two, three, or four alternate blows. The water-clock is a simple enough affair. It consists of nothing more than a large vessel filled with water, in which cups are placed, perforated so that an hour—a Burmese nayi—elapses before they sink to the bottom. It is only at the vernal and autumnal equinoxes that the hours of the day and night are equal. At other times they vary, and the Burmans make a great fuss over their complicated calculations. In July the days are longest with thirty-six hours, the night only lasting twenty-four, while these figures are exactly reversed in January. Any inaccuracy in Burmese computations arises from the loss of the fourth book of Bedin (the Indian Vedas), which was destroyed in the bonfire made by the religious of all fishing-nets, snares, weapons of war, and such writings as are denounced in the sacred books. It was by pecking at the ashes of this volume that the domestic fowls of Burma acquired that astronomical lore which induces them to crow all together at midnight (tha'gaung kyet).

It is only, however, in the capital that the water-clock is found, and in the rest of the country, and especially in all the smaller villages and towns, time is only roughly indicated by a reference to the position of the sun or the moon, or to certain daily occurrences taking place at fixed times, as "in the morning when the sun was a span above the horizon"; or "when the sun was as high as a toddy-palm"; "before the sky was light"; "when the light gets strength" about half-past five; "the earliest cock-crowing time"; "when the monks go a-begging," that is to say, six or seven in the morning, according to the custom of the local monastery; "monks' returning time," usually about eight, but varying,

14: Brant E-5 (1949-50) 1954 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

I

THE VILLAGE SETTING AND THE PEOPLE

Tadagale is a suburban community of Lower Burma, about four and one half miles north of the city center of Rangoon, chief port and national capital of the Union of Burma. To reach the village most readily one travels by automobile northward from the city along Prome Road, a main highway, to the junction with Kokine Road, beyond the city limit, on to which one turns eastward. After a quarter mile or so, one again goes northward on to a bumpy, poorly surfaced road which soon becomes dirt and terminates abruptly, after another quarter mile, at a small bridge. Tadagale means 'small bridge,' and it is after this bridge that the village is named. A few steps walk over the bridge brings one almost to the center of Tadagale. (See map on following page.)

Tadagale is more or less a 'line' type village, about 3000 yards in length. The domestic dwelling area is constituted by houses and granaries strung along the sides of a main dirt path which is just wide enough for a single bullock cart — or a jeep — to pass without scraping the bushes and trees. This area is heavily shaded from the intense tropical sun by many trees that grow in the household compounds and along the path; palms and banyans are the most prominent types. The houses are rectangular in shape, with low, slanting roofs, and platform-like porches in front. Among the more prosperous families of the village it is not unusual to find houses of plank construction, with roofs of corrugated iron. More frequently, houses are made of bamboo matted sides and palm thatched roofs. Every two or three houses share a well, which is simply an unlined and uncovered hole of perhaps ten to twelve feet in depth. In almost every compound there is a vegetable garden, from which the family supplies itself and realizes some cash income by the sale of any surplus.

To the east of Tadagale's dwelling area, perhaps five hundred yards distant and running parallel to it, is a railroad line, which begins in Rangoon and terminates at Mingaladon, about five miles north of Tadagale. A small railroad station is located at the eastern terminus of the path on which one finds oneself immediately after crossing the bridge that leads into the village. The villagers do not use the railroad nearly so much as they use buses, which run from Tadagale to Rangoon frequently.

Beyond the railroad line, still farther east, lie the paddy fields, extending out to the winding Pazundaung Creek. This creek begins at the southeastern tip of Rangoon, where the Rangoon and Pegu rivers join, and flows in a twisting course northward to separate Rangoon and the heavily populated area immediately north of the city from the sparsely settled area to the east.

Tadagale's climate is that of the tropical monsoon belt, with three well-defined seasons. From the end of October to about the end of February is the Dry Season, characterized by the absence of rain, with cool mornings and evenings. The daily maximum temperature is in the 80's and the humidity is moderate. English-speaking Burmese call this season winter; at night it is cool enough to sleep under one light blanket. The Hot Season commences at the beginning of March and lasts until June. Temperatures rise to daily maxima in the middle to high 90's, the earth is parched and cracked, and the loose dirt on the village paths, caught by occasional breezes, forms choking

14: Brant E-5 (1949-50) 1954 API Burma
Burmese AP4

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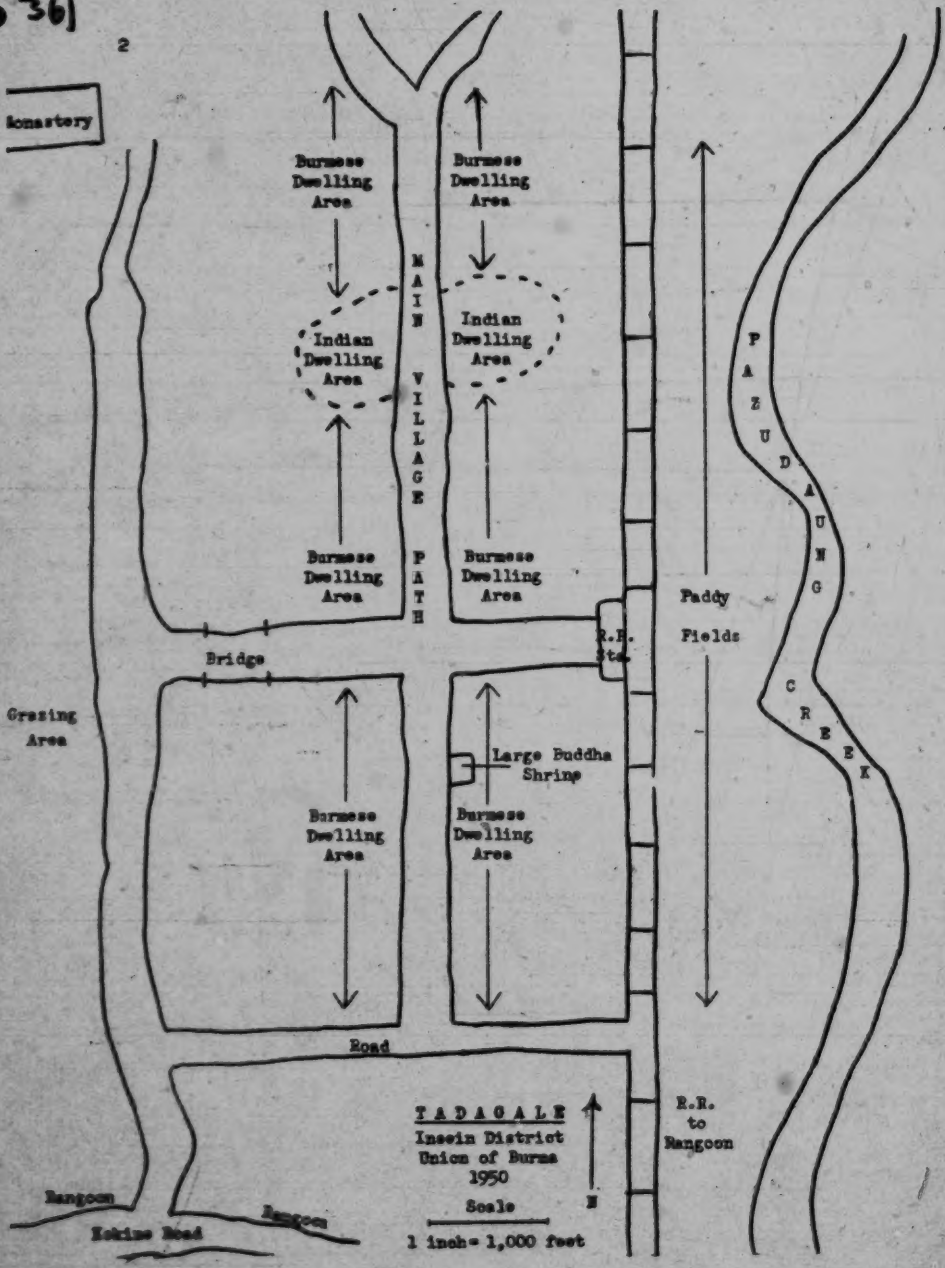

14: Brant E-5 (1949-50) 1954 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

565 556 basis of invidious distinctions. Persons of means are esteemed more for the socially valued uses to which they may put their money, such as charity, ceremonial activities, and support of the clergy, than for sheer richness or consumption.

Economic Change

178 101 433 The changing pattern of Tadagale's economic life may be described from the point of view of shift from a once largely subsistence economy to one based more upon commodity production and exchange. In discussing this shift, the general trends are best indicated if we focus upon Lower Burma rather than upon Tadagale exclusively. It is desirable to make this large area our unit because pertinent data are available for it, whereas historical information specific to the village is somewhat scant and fragmentary. The term "Lower Burma" is an administrative and geographical one. It comprises about 81,000 square miles and a population of some 9 millions, four of the administrative divisions in the highly fertile, deltaic 'rice-bowl' of Burma.

178 433 1. Background. The trend from a relatively self-sufficient subsistence economy, with little dependence upon money, to a more commercialized economy coincides with the coming of British colonial rule in Burma. Our historical perspective thus extends over a period of about 150 years. Within this span of time, profound economic change occurred in Lower Burma. Here we cannot give a detailed account of events from decade to decade, but must limit ourselves to a brief consideration of the major trends.

175 433 ●361 In pre-British Lower Burma, villages consisted of what might be called islands of clearance in a big jungle. In these settlements the Burmese peasants lived by cultivation of paddy and vegetable gardens. Individual small holdings were the rule, and the size of the plot depended almost entirely upon need. No incentive existed to clear and cultivate land beyond the requirements of household subsistence and taxes, paid in kind, to the representative of the Burmese Crown. Cotton, from the dry zone of central Burma, was spun and woven into cloth, and garments were made in the local community. Housing was of a simple bamboo and thatch type, made of materials available locally. The bullock cart provided transport on the relatively few occasions that it was necessary for the Lower Burma villager to travel distances that could not be walked. Contact between villages was minimized by the expanses of intervening, uncleared jungle country. In Tadagale, for example, one of our oldest informants was able to recall the period of his youth, around 1885, when jungle clearance and settlement was still taking place, bringing Tadagale into closer communication with other communities in the area. Local craftsmen provided the villagers with simple utensils, tools and implements.

178 433 436 456 When British colonialism took over, money came to dominate over barter. Taxation was ordered to be paid in money. The Burmese cultivator was encouraged to clear the heavy jungle, cultivate more land, sell surpluses of paddy to commercial millers, and spend his money on attractive manufactured goods imported from England, which were on display in the town shops and bazaars. Moneylenders, some of them Burmese, but especially Indians of the moneylending Chettiar caste from Madras, who could enter Burma freely, were at hand to loan money in fairly unlimited amounts to the Burmese peasants. Thus the latter could finance the expansion of their cultivation. Rates of interest charged were unregulated, and commonly ranged from 10% to 35% per year. The Burmese peasant was an easy victim: he was, at first, entirely unsophisticated in money

HOME

Home in Pathwe

Home is the village of Pathwe, Pantanaw Township, Maubin district, Lower Burma. It is located on one of the countless small streams of the Lower Irrawaddy estuary about ninety miles west of Rangoon. The country is a flat alluvium plain dissected by myriads of streams and canals. The monotony of marshy plains is relieved by occasional clumps of trees and tall reeds which flank the streams. The land is a result of depositions of silts from upstream by the Irrawaddy river and its tributaries - a process which is going on today as Lower Burma extends into the bays of Bengal and Martaban. When asked how long his family had lived in the village of Pathwe, U Myaing replied :

"My parents were born here and their parents before them and their's before them - as far back as we can remember."

The village of Pathwe occupies the adjacent banks of three streams at the point where they join.

The larger town of Pantanaw is located some three miles upstream. The section U Myaing lives in is called YWA-GYI-BET (Big-village-side) and is the main residential area of Pathwe. Directly across the stream, which is about 200 feet wide at this point, are YWA-LAY-BET (small-village-side) and PAYA-GYI-DAUNT (Big-pagoda-corner).

YWA-GYI-BET consists of four rows of houses placed 200 feet apart&parallel to the main branch of the stream. The rows consist of about fifty houses each and are separated by brick or earth roads. The brick road is raised about three feet to form a passageway in time of floods. Communal lavatories flank both sides of the village rows and the ones on the side of the river have been located about 60 or 70 feet back from the edge of the river "in order not to pollute the water." The lavatories in the village differ from one another, in that some of them are in the house itself and others are outside by a small passageway connected to the house. The houses with lavatories in them depend on the water to carry away the droppings in the rainy season.

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342 In U Myaing's house the lavatory is in the kitchen and is walled off with
514 woven KYU (kind of fiber) mat. There is a hole cut open in the board flooring, and the area underneath this opening also is walled off with woven KYU. U Myaing and family did not take their meals in the kitchen but in the house proper.

361 The PHON-GYI KYAUNG or monastery is located further downstream
368 from the village. It is a two storied brick building comprised of nine
346 rooms, each 6 TAUNG square. Children are not taught here but learn
[872] their lessons at the government school. This school, which is on
[364] YWA-GYI-BET side, teaches pupils up to the tenth standard. Below the PHON-GYI KYAUNG is the cemetery.

The houses in the village are separated one from the other by eight feet on each side. The rows of houses facing the river have porches on
342 both sides. U Myaing's house is typical of those found in the village - some may be more elaborate, some less. His house had been built only
435 six or seven years, and cost Rs. 3000/- at that time. There are no
[651] accounts for each of the separate items and U Myaing does not remember. The land was free and they did not have to pay any revenue on it.
[366] Separate from the houses and on the riverside is a huge platform built
[252] to process fish including the making of NGAPI. U Myaing had no land that [illegible] owned round the house, although he could use the land directly in front of the house for various purposes.

U Myaing describes his house as follows;

342 "It is a wooden house, made of wooden posts - a two storied
592 structure. The roof is of slates. Walls are of SHI-NGA-BU wooden boards (boards 8 inches wide and about ½ inch thick) and there are four rooms. Other people have similar houses. It is a LAY-HIN-HIN (a four-tree-house or a house which has four supporting poles across the front) and all seven of us live in the house. We drop a kitchen from the back and cook there. The kitchen has three windows at the back, with one door leading into the house. We all live together in three rooms. We keep bedrooms. (U Myaing is speaking of a sketch of the house here). This side is for visitors - there is a room for people who come to buy goods. The
[366] old mother and the children live in one room and I and my wife in another with the smallest child. We eat in the front part of the house in one room at the foot of the sleeping place. There are nine 6 TAUNG rooms without partitions on each of the two floors. The sides of the house are enclosed with timber planks of IN wood, but the bedrooms are also partitioned off. It is very wide and roomy to live in. The floor is made of teak planks."

Home in Lewis Road Refugee Camp

Since November 1949 U Myaing and his family have been living in the Lewis Road refugee camp, Rangoon. They had stopped at half a dozen places prior to their present abode, but their living had been on very much the same scale. The refugee camp is located about a mile north of the Shwe Dagon Pagoda on a hilly promontory. The area is not far from Tiger Alley (U Wisara Road) and along this road and others nearby, huts have been built up within the last few years, largely by war refugees. The buildings of the camp were earlier used as headquarters and barracks by the People's Volunteer Organisation (P.V.O.). The P.V.O. is an offshoot of the Burmese Patriot's Army following the end of the Second World War. It was originally an army, but after independence was converted into an "organisation" for political purposes. A Yellow Band and a White Band section developed and the White P.V.O.s becoming insurgents.

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The vital statistics of the camp as given by U Khant, the school master are as follows:- 269 families comprised of 856 adults (LU GYI), 211 young people (LU LAT), and 33 infants (NO SO) live in 15 huts . The number of families in each hut ranges from 9 in the smallest to 36 in the largest. The infant category includes those babies who are still breast feeding - up to one year of age. The adult category begins at the age of voting - 18 years. The proportion of the three categories as shown in the totals remains fairly consistent for each of the houses indicating that there are no special age-grade habitations. The refugees come for the most part from the Delta area of Lower Burma, from the districts of Pantanaw and Bassein but they have not organised themselves in their huts according to the district or village from which they come. The assignment of space has been on a pragmatic basis according to who arrived at what time. The buildings consisted for the most part of rectangular huts measuring 30 feet by 15 feet with woven split bamboo walls and thatched roofs. When the area was converted into a refugee camp, each family was assigned a certain space which they then partitioned off. A map of the refugee camp area shows a haphazard plan. The only

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[791] 722 361 792 361 apparently meaningful locations would be the huts of the PHON-GYIS located on the peripheries of the camp on local promontories.

The new PHON-GYI KYAUNG near the entrance of the camp was built by others, not by the refugees. The one at the back, on the other hand, was built by contributions among the refugees themselves. One PHON-GYI and one small boy reside here. The PHON-Gyi from the new KYAUNG comes for HSOON (food given to begging monks) once in a while. A third PHON-GYI KYAUNG at the far rear also was in existance before U Myaing's arrival at camp. Here also resides one PHON-GYI and one small boy.

723 362 U Myaing came by himself to camp and took possession of the place he now lives in. The camp-head assigned the place to him. When they first arrived in Rangoon they had to rent a room at HPA-HSA-PA-L[illegible]-KWETTHIT (an area of huts organised by the Anti-facists Peoples Freedom League, the political party now in power) for a period of 2½ months at Rs. 17/8 per month. This was because they did not know of the refugee camp. They learnt of its existence just as their money ran out, and they shifted over.

U Myaing is of opinion that since he is installed in these quarterssno other family will come to put up there, but admits that if they did, he would not have any right to drive them out, since he does not own the place. He is a comparative latecomer to the camp. Other families have been here for nearly two years now, while U Myaing arrived only 10 months ago. The extensions to the eaves of the roof were made by U Myaing. The condition of the camp when he came was very much the same as it is now. Only two additional huts and one PHONGYI KYAUNG have been erected since. He considers that his quarters are slightly better off than those of others in that there is less bustle and confusion in the buildings.

722 342 The quarters assigned to U Myaing are formed by the extension of the eaves of a rectangular house. The house, which measures 60 feet long by 20 feet wide has bamboo matwalls about 10 feet high, is floored with stone paves and has six windows 3 feet square on the long sides. There is a door 3 feet wide at one end. The roof is gabled with a ridge pole from which 8 rafters sixteen feet long are attached. The extensions of the roof consist of thatched leaves on

quiet), the time when the children become quiet from 7 to 8. 9 to 10 p.m. is known as THATKYI-KAUNG-CHA (oldage-head-drop) when the elders begin to nod; from 11 to midnight and beyond is LUKLIN-PYAN CHAIK (Bachelors'-return-time) when young men complete their carousing and return to sleep. AMO (dawn) comes at the second cocks'crowing (first is at mid-night) about 4 o'clock. The KALA-HNIT (Indians-marching in) hollow wooden drum is struck in the phongyi-kyaungs at this time to awaken the village. The women who prepare breakfast, and the old folks who rise to worship appear at this time - but others may sleep on for an hour or so.

It is obligatory to wash the legs and feet before retiring. In warm weather a mat is preferred for coolness - but in colder and damp weather a mattress is considered necessary for protection. Prayers taking from 2 minutes (most) up to considerably longer are generally said before bed-time. These praise Buddha and include such supplications as "may I be lifted up to heaven soon." Dreams may be good or bad according to the disposition of the nats. Certain dreams have meanings applicable as omens. It is during sleep that the ghost of a recently departed loved one contacts the sleeper and, sometimes, succeeds in luring him away permanently.

Analysis of home standard in Pathee and in Refugee Camp.

The Pathee home was in nearly every way superior to refugee camp home. Let us examine the nature of this superiority and attempt to see the adjustment which U Myaing made in the refugee camp. The Pathee home was an independent unit as compared to the refugee camp apartment-like home. However we may not assume that U Myaing found this a disadvantage, since living in Pantanaw was "close". The quarters in the one case were separated by half a dozen feet and on the other by a bamboo partition. An important difference is that the Pathee home was owned by U Myaing and he had inalienable rights there, whereas the refugee camp apartment was loaned to him for a short time period.

Only about one fiftieth of the space was available in the refugee camp (15,050 cubic feet in Pathee, 315 cubic feet in camp.) However,

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much of the Pathwe space was not vital in that it was used for social or storage functions only. 2987 cubic feet were used in Pathwe for sleeping, cooking, and religious purposes,-approximately 20% of the total amount of space. However, all of the space in the refugee camp was used for these vital purposes. About 1/10th of the Pathwe space for these functions was available in the camp. In commenting on the differences, U Myaing especially stressed the lack of space and the fact that all functions had to be done in the same enclosure. He did not seem particularly bothered about the lack of space for social functions or visitors.

There seemed to be no difference regarding costs of housing - non-existent in both cases beyond the original investment in Pathwe. Also there is no difference regarding use of land surrounding house. The reduction of space available for the altar from a six taung room to a place on the wall seemed to be regarded lightly. The Pathwe house was undoubtedly healthier with its windows and open space, and this handicap will be further discussed under the heading of health.

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There is considerable difference in the house furnishings of the two places. The quality and the quantity of the objects in the refugee camp are considerably lower. The bric-a-brac (porcelain duck glass elephant, and portelain water jug) were lost in Pathwe and regretted because of sentimental value. The earthen-ware jars used for storing fish have no use here and are not "desired", but the HSOON vessels would be useful now. These would cost about Rs. 25/- apiece here. The KYAUK-KAN food carrier is also desired and this would cost Rs. 10/- here. Mosquito nets for Daw Aw Zar and the children would certainly be desirable, but these would cost over Rs.30/- even if made from cheap plain material.

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The tables used in Pathwe are not found in camp since the family sit on the floor on the mats and hold their dishes in their laps, and one stool is used in camp and this by Ma Aye Myaing in preparing the food. Storage containers including cupboards and boxes have been dispensed with and their place taken by baskets in camp. The bedding in camp lacks the comforts of mattress and adequate mosquito nets and pillows. The point must be made however, that U Myaing's family is

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used to sleeping on hard surfaces and it may not be supposed that the

21: Htin Aung E-5 (ca. 1930) 1937 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

scenes. Still later, the scenes came to be taken from one story only, so that a whole story was given by the pageant. Dresses became quite gorgeous and the scheme elaborate. The pageant now needed organization. Therefore, the village came to be divided into two parts, eastern and western quarters or northern and southern quarters (the village was usually greater in length than breadth, being built along a main road). In larger villages and towns, the division was into four quarters. Each quarter was responsible for the production of a pageant. There was intense rivalry between the quarters to produce the finest pageant; it was usually friendly, but often enmity arose, and many pageants were occasions for free fights. The rivalry further developed the pageant, for new ideas would be introduced by one quarter to outrival the others. Soon the pageant became a play, its scenes coming to life.

The *Nibhatkhin* was the Burmese equivalent of the English miracle and mystery plays. It was the pageant come to life. With the pageant, the religious processions went along the main streets without stopping, each cart representing a set scene. But with the *Nibhatkhin*, each cart stopped at certain places. The most common of such places were the market-place, the house of the chief administrative officer, and the pagoda where the procession ended. At each of those places, each cart stopped, and the scene came to life. Dialogue and action were used. Therefore, people at the stopping places saw what was in effect a play.

The *Nibhatkhin* was extremely popular, and it lived on until recently, just as many of the English miracle plays continued to be produced right through the Elizabethan period. I saw one in the out-of-the-way town of Pauk as recently as 1916. However, I do not think that *Nibhatkhins* are produced anywhere nowadays. Sometimes one sees a procession on cars and motor lorries as a sort of reminiscence of the *Nibhatkhin*. But such processions are mere shows and lack the essential features of the Burmese miracle plays.

It was for the entertainment of the populace that the *Nibhatkhin* came into being, and as the Burmese entertainment connotes laughter, soon the element of humour came into the *Nibhatkhin*. At first none of the characters was made humorous, for they all came out of religious stories. And so the clown was introduced. The clown or *Lu-byet* ('the non-serious man') was put into the *Nibhatkhin* as an extra character, an attendant on the prince-hero. He was extremely popular, and soon another clown, an attendant on the princess-heroine,

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

[OPP. P.42]

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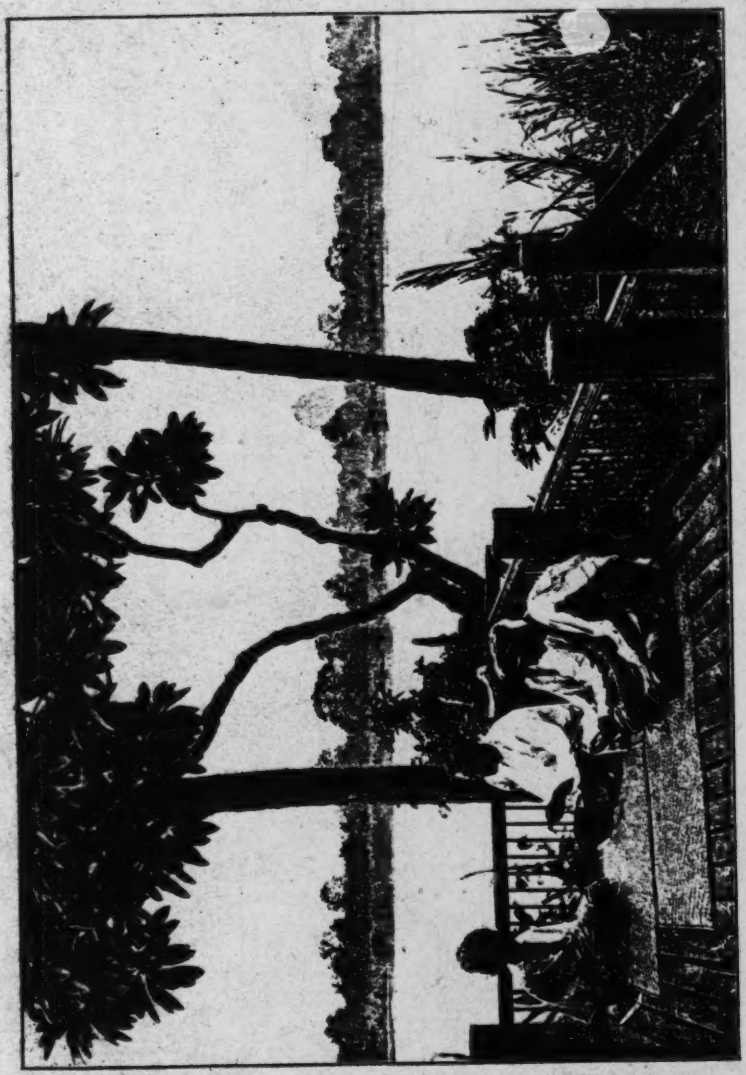

92 ELDERS KEEPING DUTY-DAY.

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

168. VILLAGE CHEVAUX-DE-FRISE.

away from the company. In a similar spirit of courtesy a rider dismounts and umbrellas are closed. Among acts of discourtesy few are accounted so grave by the Burmans as that of awakening a sleeper. The reluctance to disturb a sleeper is connected with the belief that the spirit (*leiphya*) leaves the body during sleep (p. 197). It is looked upon as a weakness to show resentment and temper (*dawtha*, p. 44). A visitor in a house is offered a new mat to sit upon, water to drink, betel to chew, and a spittoon. If it be meal-time he is invited to partake; otherwise he is asked if he has had food, and refreshment is brought. Although the quota of leisure that falls to everyone is greater in Burma than anywhere else, owing to the wide-spread prosperity of the inhabitants, there is perhaps no country in which every man, woman, and child is less exempt from business concern. Thus it happens that after a few commonplaces, conversation inevitably gravitates to business—prices, harvests, prospects. Next in interest come the festival programmes, the local celebrities and their doings. In every house there are scales and weights, and the household is engaged in occasional or regular trade. Accounts in money and kind are current between neighbours. Whatever spare produce remains is exposed for sale.

The villages either have a quick fence of impenetrable thorny bamboo (*myinwa*), or a hedge of cactus and briar, or bamboo *chevaux-de-frise*. In some parts they are open. The old towns (*myó*) had ramparts and stockades (Nos. 6, 371, 387). The highest sites about the village are for the *sula*, the *Payá-aye* or sacred ground, the next best are for the *kyaung*. Then comes the enclosure of

167. APPROACH TO THE VILLAGE.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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188. VILLAGE CAUSEWAY IN THE TIDAL REGION.

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the village head-man or other functionary, and round about, the houses of the villagers in more or less regular rows. The village streets are broad and in some places the houses are well-spaced, with plots of fruit-trees and vegetable-gardens between and at the back. No care is bestowed on the roads except in a few riverain localities and tidal regions, where embanked roads [245] and brick causeways are necessary. Trees are planted in front of the houses—cocoanut and betel palms, giant bamboo, the evergreens, tamarind, mango, and jack, for their fruit and shade: *gangaw*, *sagâ*, and *padâuk* for their shade and scented flowers; *mèzali*, *zi*, and several *ficus* species. The screw-pine and various ornamental shrubs are cultivated—*tarôssaga* (*frangipani*, No. 92), *sènnaya*, gardenias, and roses. *Palma Christi* (castor-oil plant) is common for hedges. [177 Plants cultivated by Europeans in the tropics—crotons, begonias, caladiums, 247] balsams—are spreading everywhere. Pot-gardening is becoming a feature of the villages and even of the raft-houses and boats.

231 Well received as the stranger is by the people of the village, he has to brave the displeasure of the village curs. The dogs are the scavengers of the [136] settlements, together with the crows and the myriads of ants. The termites ("white ants") account for the dry vegetable refuse, but they also invade the dwellings and destroy dry wood, mats, and thatch. Cats attach themselves to houses in the same way as dogs. A peculiarity of the domestic cat of Burma is

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189. VILLAGE RIVER-FRONT.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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173. VILLAGE SCENE IN THE DRY SEASON.

see Appendix E), with a fall of fifty to two hundred inches according to locality, and with shade temperatures of 75 to 88° F. The cool dry season is from November to February (*Naddw, Pyathô, Tabôdwè*), with rare showers, and shade temperatures ranging from 50 to 80° in the twenty-four hours. The cool season is most pronounced in the inland and northern regions, less so in the south and the neighbourhood of the sea. At elevations of four thousand feet, winter-night frosts occur. The hot months are March and April (*Tabáung, Tagú*), with occasional showers, and shade temperatures of 80–95°, and 90–105°, according to locality, in the course of the day. There is always a considerable fall of temperature at night in Burma. October (*Thadindyut—Tazaungmôn*) frequently has the character of the hot months. The regions which have the lowest temperatures in the cool seasons have the highest in the hot season. But the greater heat of the dry zone is relatively not so trying as is a lesser heat in an atmosphere saturated with moisture, which impedes the cooling of the body by evaporation. As the heat attains its climax, clouds begin to gather. The rains break, often quite abruptly, with violent thunderstorms. Nevertheless, lightning-stroke is uncommon. Hail is very rare. Even before the rains set in, the great rivers Irawadi and Salween begin to swell, owing, as it is believed, to the melting of Himalayan snows in which they have their sources. The high floods of these rivers, however, coincide with the heavy rainfall in Burma. Towards the beginning of July the rivers and tributaries have risen ten to twenty feet, submerging their banks and flooding the low-lands. The Irawadi at Mandalay, where it is about two miles wide, rises thirty

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174. SOUTH-WEST MONSOON CLOUDS.

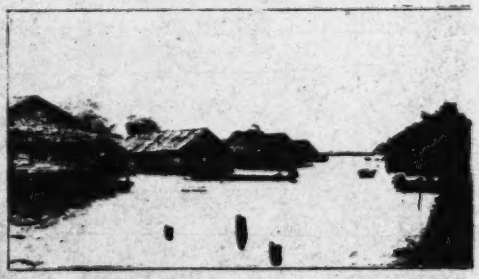
25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

178. VILLAGE ENVIRONS IN THE FLOODS.

feet. The Salween, above the rapids, with a width of a quarter of a mile, rises fifty feet. The high level is maintained, with fluctuations, till September. The water in the main channels is turbid and heavy with yellow silt, but it clears itself in the grass-grown *Kwin*. Many a cart-track of the dry weather becomes a creek passable by deep-laden boats. The whole aspect of the country and mode of life are changed; the villages of the Delta are accessible by water, and many stand in water. At this season the heavy traffic of the country proceeds. In some places the rise is so great and so variable that the people depend on their boats, and every child has a tub of its own (Nos. 159, 161). Such a village is Sanyuè on the Myimmakâ (*Myit-ma-kâ*), the river that denies its tribute to the great Irawadi, and delivers the waters of the Yôma straight to the sea (see map, and *môuakâ*, p. 115).

The rise of the spring-tides above mean low-water level on the coast of Burma is sixteen to eighteen feet. In certain estuaries of the Martaban Gulf dangerous bores are produced. In the Delta, which is a network of creeks, and in Arakân, the facilities afforded for traffic by the tidal currents are unequalled.

The abatement of the monsoon rains, in the course of September, like the break of the monsoon, is attended with thunderstorms. The surface soon dries and the sub-soil water begins to sink, leaving but little marsh land (*kwet*). As the hot season advances, the trees and bamboos of the dry forest lose their leaves, and the grasses wither, covering the soil with an inflammable layer. In the open, the heavy dews



177. VILLAGE SCENE IN THE HIGH FLOOD.

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

484 inferior to his own—not penetrating as far as China or India, where he might
485 witness the dire struggle for existence which has disciplined the races about to compete for his soil—the Burman fails to realise how enviable is the lot he

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315. TOWN ENVIRONS IN THE DRY ZONE.

316. CARVED FIGURE OF ANANDA (p. 35).

now enjoys and to recognise the nature of the influences which may effect the decline of his prosperity. Great as are the facilities for travel from the native point of view, to Europeans the discomfort of travel, once off the lines of rail and steamer, is so considerable that few who can avoid it visit the interior.

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317. FERRY STATION.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Shan AP11

[opp. p. 142]

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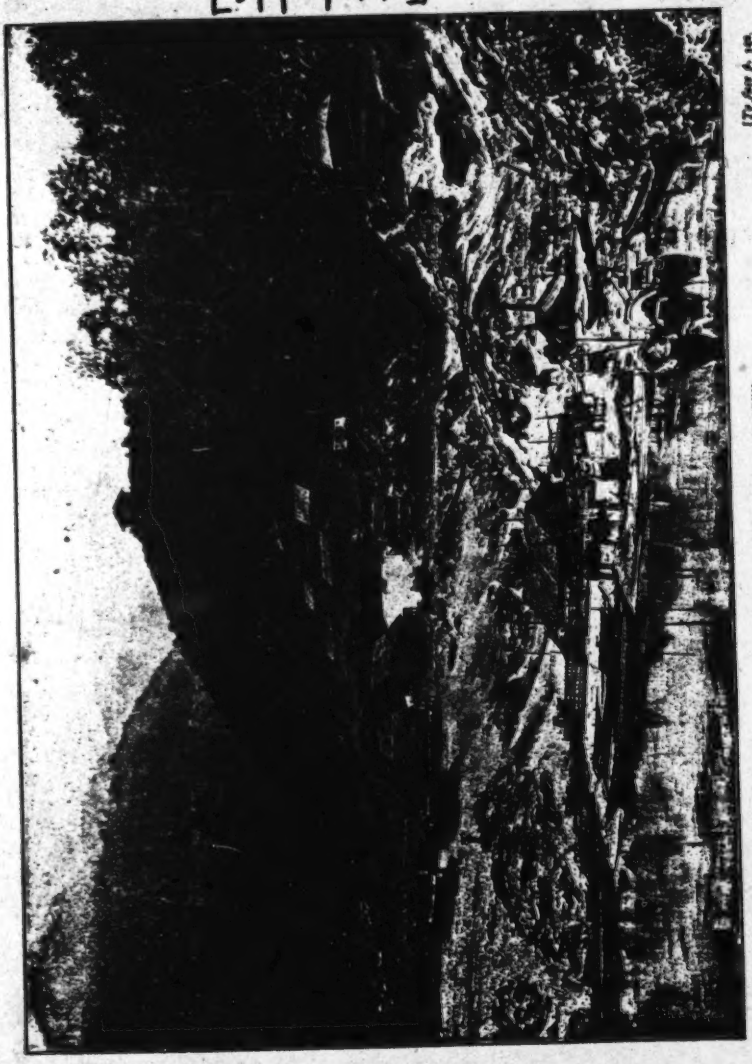
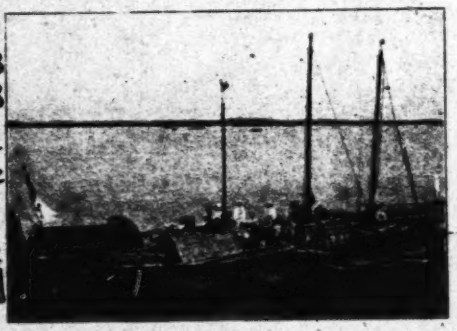


[Ph. Adam & Co.

320. SHAN VILLAGE ON THE SALWEEN.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma AP1
Indians
Burmese AP4

Ba 167 563 463
Ba Bse 511
Bse [501]



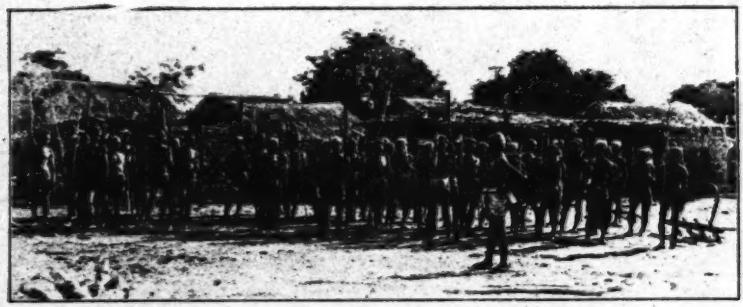
365. BRINGING THE PADDY TO THE RICE-MILLS.

ot every class and caste, with his foreign connection and longer experience, has an incalculable advantage over the untravelled Burman. Beginning with a lower standard of comfort than the Burman—squatting on the bare soil where the poorest Burman makes a floor, wearing cotton where the other wears silk, and being able to improve his original condition upon half the return that the Burman expects for his work—the Indian immigrant finds land worth his labour which the Burman leaves waste. The influx of races whose religion it is to multiply, without regard to the prospect of subsistence, must speedily result in lowering the scale of life for everyone in Burma—a country of which it may now be said that "a large share of the happiness of each individual is derived from the consciousness of the well-being of other individuals." (Herbert Spencer, *Principles of Ethics*, Vol. I., p. 297.) Commencing by hiring the cheap Indian labour to reap his corn, then to plough and till his fields, the while emulating his neighbours in superfluous works, the Burman is apt to end by becoming the debtor of his servant, and mortgaging to him his lands. It seems to many that there is no escape for the Burman from the Indian flood that now menaces his country. But up to the present no class of Indians has attempted to deal with land subject to the vicissitudes of the Burman riverain soil. It is unlikely that people of less versatility and resource will establish themselves there. In 1879, when the vagaries of the Irawadi had submerged the cultivation on the Panhlaing creek some twelve feet, and the eaves of the houses were under water, the cattle were saved in hasty platforms made in

Bse [426]
Ba Bse 563 241 731
Bse [361]

366. FORESHORE AT THE FACTORIES.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4



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370. HEADMAN MUSTERING HIS VILLAGERS.

CHAPTER VII

POLITICAL

WITH alien races planted on his soil and the watchful rivalry of the Taláing to contend with, the Burman had hourly need to guard his camp. Besides the enemies without, and their potential allies within, brigand bands of his own race had to be held in check. The chronic wars of Burman and Taláing (Mun), who were separated by no natural frontier, have left their record in the stockaded villages between Prome and Mimbu, a no-man's-land in which soldiers were impressed to fight, now on this side, now on that, and where, on being disbanded, they continued the plunder by which the armies subsisted in war. The traditions of brigandage and the exploits of noted leaders are remembered, and such enterprises are still a resort of the *vauriens* of a village or country-side when they perceive their chance—*damyá-taik shàya!* These brigands (*damyá*, gang-robbers, dacoits) lay their plans to surprise a village while the men are away at work or endeavour to create a panic by a night attack and so obtain their booty without risk of an encounter. An occasional gang might

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371. BURMAN OUTPOST STOCKADE.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

175 Aláung Payâ established in 1754, is the involved account of the struggles for mastery of its three imperial races, the Burman, the Mun, and the Shan.* As already stated in the Introduction, the isolation of the valley of the Irawadi from the neighbouring civilisations by great natural barriers, favoured the development of an independent and distinct civilisation. The neutralization of those barriers it is that now exposes Burma to the sudden competition of races inured to worse conditions.

* See Appendix A, CHRONOLOGY.

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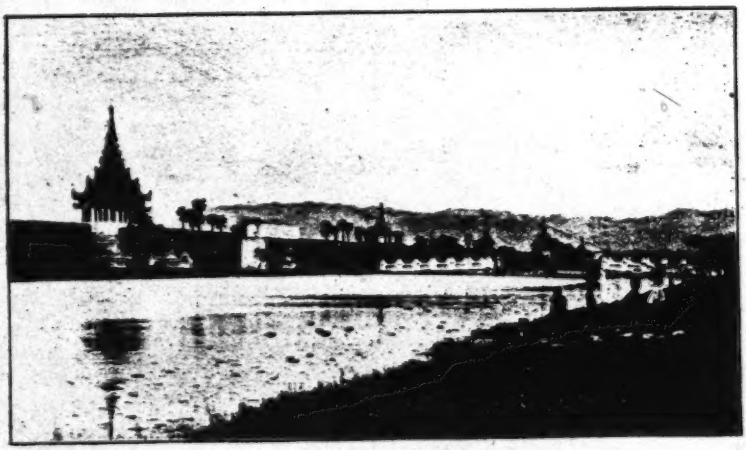

387. THE CITY MOAT.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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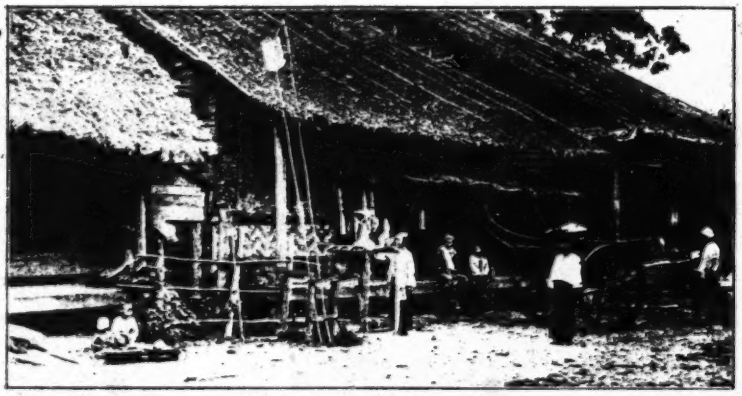

431. DECORATING THE THEBONZEDI p. 127.

CHAPTER IX

AGE AND MORTALITY

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432. A DAUGHTER PRAYING HER PARENTS TO NOBO-SAT.

THE men and women of the tropics age and die sooner than those of temperate climates. One meets reputed centenarians in Burma, but it is rarely that the old people can prove their age, unless they are able to connect their year of birth with some historical event. Ninety years is a very great age for a native of Burma to attain. When parents are past their prime their children pray them to *nobo-sat*, which means that they should be at the children's charge for the remainder of their lives, as the children had first been at their parents'. The turning-point is not marked by any formality, but a child approaching parents on a solemn occasion adopts the gesture of veneration. The aged are not idle; they preserve a great elasticity of mind and interest in things;

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which was not at all unknown in European countries. About it see: R. Andree, Ethnographische Parallelen /Ethnographic Parallels/ (1878), pp. 18 ff.; F.S. Krauss, "Das Bauopfer bei den Südslaven" /Building Sacrifice among the Southern Slavs/, Mitteilungen der anthropologischen Gesellschaft zu Wien /Proceedings of the Vienna Anthropological Society/, Vol. 17 (1887), pp. 16 ff.; W.T. Brigham, The Ancient Hawaiian House (Memoirs B.P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu II, 3), pp. 27 ff.

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In earlier days every Burmese settlement was surrounded by a fortification, cities having stone walls or stockades, the villages impenetrable fences of close rows of thorny bamboo shrubs, prickly cacti, or palisade-like fences of bamboo poles between which pointed bamboo stakes protruded. The latter type of fortification exists today only in the areas where the mountain tribes live, beyond the zone of British administration. Before the British took over, the constant feuds between the individual tribes and the excesses of robbery made it necessary for each village to protect itself like a fort. With the increased safety of travel and property under the British rule this has become more and more unnecessary, although some districts still experience nocturnal robberies. The villages in the Prome District, which has one of the worst criminal records in Burma, are with practically no exceptions enclosed by dense high, thorny hedges which have only narrow entrances.

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The buildings of the Shan (11)--population in

11. Cf. especially L. Milne, Shans at Home (London, 1910), pp. 100 ff.; A.K. Gebauer, "Die nördlichen Schanstaaten und ihre Bewohner" /The Nor-

31: Scherman--77 E-4 (no date) 1915 AP1 Burma

Burmese AP4
Shan AP11

PLATES

Plate IV

1.

B
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Street in the Burmese village of Koya, upper Burma (upper Chindwin District).

2.

Burmese house in the village of Thindaw, upper Burma (upper Chindwin District).

3.

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Burmese house in the village of Yuwa, upper Burma (upper Chindwin District).

4.

House with decorated mat walls. Shan-Burmese mixed style. Village of Pekon, southern Shan State of Mongpai (Burmese: Mobye).

Plate V

1.

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Small Shan house near Lashio, northern Shan State of Hsenwi.

2.

Larger Shan house in Namhkam, northern Shan State of North Hsenwi.

3.

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Shan family having their meal, Namhkam.

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4.

House of the village headman in Lashio Ywama, northern Shan state of North Hsenwi. Shan-Burmese mixed style.

31:Scherman--80 E-4 (no date)1915 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4
Shan AP11

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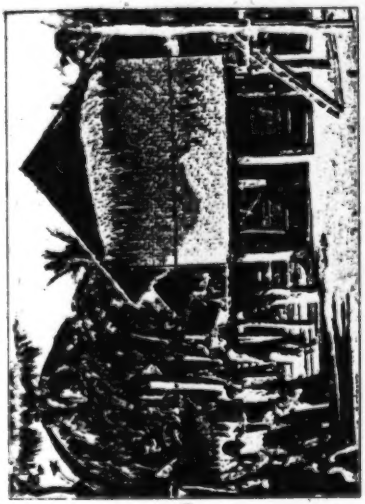

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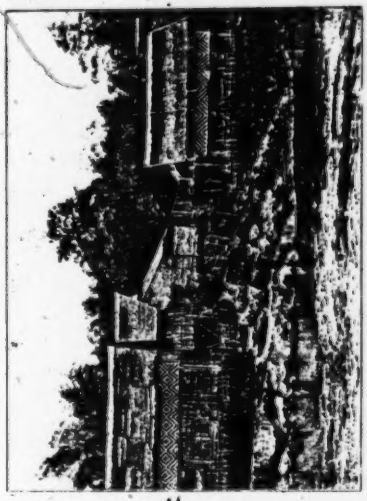

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Plate IV

[For description see page 77, category 116.
—Analyst]